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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4860
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 1593
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 7196
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 6136
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 9366
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3919
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 000996

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: SITUATION IN SWAT AS OF MAY 9

Classified By: CDA Gerald Feierstein for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

11. (SBU) Summary. Operations in Swat District continued on May 9 with reports of over 140 militants killed during the day. Press reports indicate that the Pakistan Air Force started aerial assaults in the Swat city of Mingora on the morning of May 9. By the evening, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) placed the current population of the new internally displaced persons at 150,000 from Dir, Buner, and Swat districts. Once the curfew in Swat is lifted on the evening of May 9, the number is expected to increase significantly. IDPs began looting camp supplies at a UN IDP camp in Mardan after 300 additional families arrived at the already full camp. The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) approved a grant for USD 4.9 million to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to purchase 30,000 non-food item (NFI) kits and 5,000 tents for the expected IDP influx. Northwest Frontier Province Chief Secretary has established an operational center within the Provincial Relief Commissioners Office for IDP support and has asked for USG assistance. In a speech on May 9, Prime Minister Gilani announced that the Federal Cabinet individually pledged 200 million rupees (approximately USD 2.5 million) for a fund to assist the growing numbers of IDPs and plans to send various ministers to do an assessment of the current IDP camps. The National Assembly is scheduled to convene in a special session on the IDP situation on May 11. End Summary.

MILITARY OPERATIONS -----

12. (S/NF) Operations in Swat District (Malakand Division, NWFP) continued on May 9 with reports from the Pakistan military Inter Services Public Relations office of over 140 militants killed within the past twenty-four hours. According to press reports, the Pakistan Air Force started aerial assaults on targets on the main Swat city of Mingora on May 9. According to Special Operations Command (Forward) - Pakistan (SOC-FWD), almost all the 11th Corps assets, including combat aviation support, have been pulled from Buner and other areas of conflict in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) to conduct operations in Swat.

IDP AND ASSISTANCE UPDATE -----

13. (SBU) As of the evening of May 9, recent population displacements from Buner, Lower Dir, and Swat districts

number approximately 150,000 individuals. The international assistance community now places the current number of registered IDPs within the original 11 camps at approximately 540,000 displaced individuals. A curfew remains in place in Swat, preventing many of the residents from leaving; however, the NWFP government has said it plans to lift the curfew on the evening of May 9. UNHCR told the Embassy that it expects "the floodgates to open" once this curfew is lifted, if not earlier. International relief organizations continue to expect the overall number of IDPs to rise to approximately 1.3 million.

¶4. (SBU) On May 9, a riot took place at a UN-managed IDP camp in Mardan District (south of Swat and Lower Dir) after 300 additional displaced families attempted to enter the camp, which was already at the 1000-family maximum capacity. According to Mardan District Commissioner Adil Khan, the UN camp officials attempted to provide the additional families with supplies when both the residents of the camp and those attempting to enter overran the staff and began to loot the supplies. Police and security forces were called to the camp to restore order, and the additional families were ordered to the next nearest IDP camp in neighboring Swabi District. (Note: IDPs coming from Swat are also being diverted to Jalojai where surge capacity is available, with space for approximately 1000 additional IDPs. End note.)

¶5. (SBU) On May 8, USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) approved a grant for USD 4.9 million to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to purchase 30,000 non-food item (NFI) kits and 5,000 tents for the

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expected influx of IDPs. These items will be distributed in cooperation with the UNHCR, and IOM was given a pre-approval letter in order to start immediate procurement of relief supplies.

¶6. (SBU) NWFP Chief Secretary Javed Iqbal has established an operations center within the Provincial Relief Commissioner's Office to assist with the growing IDP situation. In doing so, Iqbal has asked the USG for computers, consultant assistance and other administrative needs for the center. The USAID-funded Capacity Building Program is working with the Chief Secretary to respond to the request and plans to have the operational center working in a few days.

¶7. (SBU) Iqbal also asked for USG assistance in providing generators and transformers for the IDP camps the NWFP government plans to establish over the next week. The generators and transformers will maintain power to the pumps to keep the camp supplied with water, particularly as load-shedding is likely to increase over the summer months. Although details about the camps or the number of expected camps are unknown at this time, the USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) is looking into the request and plans to provide immediate assistance.

PRIME MINISTER PLEDGES IDP SUPPORT

¶8. (SBU) On May 9, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani announced at a press conference a series of decisions related to the IDP and security situations in Malakand Division. The conference followed a meeting of the Cabinet. Gilani told the press he would be calling the National Assembly back into session during the afternoon of May 11 to take up the current situation. He also called on the political parties and civil society to hold parades and demonstrations in cities around the country to protest against terrorism while urging the media to cover the developing situation responsibly. On IDP relief, Gilani reiterated that he had responded to the growing crisis immediately by releasing PKR 1 billion (USD 12.5 million) to the provincial government for relief operations. He indicated that the Cabinet had further approved using the Benazir Income Support Program for IDP

assistance and noted that Cabinet ministers had individually donated PKR 200 million (approximately USD 2.5 million) and one month salary for relief programs. Gilani also said that he would dispatch ministers to the camps in NWFP to do an assessment of conditions there.

¶9. (SBU) Separately, the Punjab government announced they would be dispatching several truck convoys of food and medicine for IDP camps in the Frontier. The Pakistan Muslim League, for its part, announced that it has established a PKR 100,000 fund for Swat IDPs.

ARREST WARRANT FOR BAITULLAH MAHSUD

¶10. (SBU) Pakistani press is also reporting that the government has issued an arrest warrant for Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) warlord Baitullah Mahsud. The warrant is in connection with the attacks earlier this year on the Sri Lankan cricket team and the Manawan police training academy, both in Lahore. According to one press report, a TTP commander threatened to retaliate for Army attacks in Malakand by attacking civilian government leaders.
FEIERSTEIN